REMARKS

Applicants reply to the Office Action mailed on October 6, 2006, within the three month shortened statutory period for reply. The Examiner rejects claims 1-15 in the subject application. Claims 1-15 (1 independent claim; 15 total claims) remain pending in the application. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-12 and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hanaya, US Patent No. 5,754,258 ("Hanaya"). The Examiner also rejects claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hanaya. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claim 1 recites, "... a mute section <u>for muting the first audio signal</u> which is output from the audio signal switch section when the audio signal switch section <u>switches the second audio signal to the first audio signal</u>" (emphasis added). For example, the specification discloses that when the output signal switch circuit 108 (audio signal switch section) switches the audio signal 128A (second audio signal) having the volume level B1 to the audio signal 126 (first audio signal) having the volume level Al, the audio mute circuit 106 (mute section) <u>mutes the audio signal 126 (first audio signal)</u> output from the audio output terminal 112 (see page 9, lines 24-32).

In contrast, Hanaya simply discloses an objective of providing a program switching device and a method which allows users to select a desired program very swiftly by preliminarily initiating the receiving operation in accordance with a cursor movement on a control display (see col. 1. lines 36-43). Therefore, Hanaya fails to even address the problem solved by the present invention which prevents an audio signal having a different volume level from the previously reproduced audio signal from being output, and thus prevents the user from feeling uncomfortable (see page 4, lines 19-25).
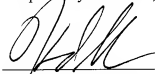
In particular, in col. 21 line 1 - col. 22, line 15 cited by the Examiner, Hanaya discloses that when a cursor is moved to a button icon of other program, the program displayed as an animated image <u>before the cursor is moved</u> is converted into a static image and the sound signal is muted. Thereafter, the video and audio decoder executes the receiving processing of the program associated with the button icon to which the cursor is moved. After the receiving processing is completed, the static image is converted into an animated image of the program to which the cursor is moved (see col. 21, lines 6-24 and lines 34-43). That is, the received animated image and the sound signal of the channel <u>after switching</u> are output without being made static or mute (see col. 22, lines 12-15). For example, Hanaya clearly discloses that the image <u>that has been displayed</u> becomes a static image and <u>the sound signal (e.g. second audio signal) is muted</u> when a channel switching in input

(see col. 21, line 65 - col. 22, line 2). Signficantly, Hanaya has <u>not</u> been found to disclose a mute section for muting the <u>first audio signal</u> when the switch section <u>switches the second audio signal to the first audio signal</u>.

Claims 2-15 variously depend from independent claim 1, so Applicants assert that claims 2-15 are differentiated from the cited reference for the same reasons as set forth above, in addition to their own respective features.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is thus requested. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees, which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. **19-2814**. Applicant invites the Examiner to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner has any questions whatsoever regarding this Reply or the present application in general.

Respectfully submitted,

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